

REMARKS

Claims 54-108 are presently pending in this application. Claims 1-53 were cancelled in previous papers. The undersigned would like to thank Examiner Koch for holding several teleconferences at the end of May 2005.

The status of the application in light of the Office Action dated 2 June 2005 is as follows:

(A) Claims 54-108 were provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over each of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,431,421; 5,168,886; or 5,168,887.

(B) Claims 54-107 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over various combinations of references.

A. **Response to Section 103 Rejections**

Claims 54-108 were provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over each of the following patents: (a) U.S. Patent No. 5,235,995; (b) U.S. Patent No. 5,431,421; (c) U.S. Patent No. 5,168,886; or (d) U.S. Patent No. 5,168,887. These rejections should be withdrawn because each of these references qualifies as prior art only under Section 102(e), and the subject matter of each of the foregoing patents and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, either owned by or subject to an obligation of assignment to Semitool, Inc. Additionally, please find enclosed a Request to Change Inventorship that includes an assignment from the inventors to Semitool, Inc. Thus, the various rejections of claims 54-108 under Section 103 should be withdrawn.

B. **Response to Non-Statutory Double Patenting Rejections**

Claims 54-107 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over (a) claims 1-50 of U.S. Patent No. 6,375,741 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri, Karl and Thompson, and (b) claims 1-23 of U.S. Patent No. 5,658,387 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri, Karl and Thompson. This rejection is now moot because Terminal Disclaimers to U.S. Patent Nos. 6,375,741 and 6,658,387 were filed on 27 May 2005. Therefore, these double patenting rejections should be withdrawn.

Claims 54-102 and 104 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-44 of U.S. Patent No. 5,431,421 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri, Karl and Thompson. This rejection is now moot because a Terminal Disclaimer to U.S. Patent No. 5,431,421 was filed on 27 May 2005.

Claims 54-107 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1-44 of U.S. Patent No. 5,235,995 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri, Karl and Thompson. This rejection is also moot because a Terminal Disclaimer to U.S. Patent No. 5,235,995 was filed on 27 May 2005.

Claims 54-107 were rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over both (a) claims 1-32 of U.S. Patent No. 5,168,886 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri and Karl, and (b) claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 5,168,887 in view of Ringer, Nakagiri and Karl. These double patenting rejections are also moot because Terminal Disclaimers to U.S. Patent Nos. 5,168,886 and 5,168,887 were filed on 27 May 2005.


Claims 54-107 were further rejected under the doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting over (a) claims 1-32 of U.S. Patent No. 5,168,886; (b) claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 5,168,887; (c) claims 1-32 of U.S. Patent No. 5,235,995; and (d) claims 1-44 of U.S. Patent No. 5,431,421. These rejections are also moot because Terminal Disclaimers to each of these patents were filed on 27 May 2005 as explained above.

C. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the cited art. The applicant accordingly requests reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call Paul T. Parker at (206) 359-3258.

Respectfully submitted,
Perkins Coie LLP

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